POTENTIAL CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

MARCH 19, 2011

CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

- A neighborhood or district with a distinctive physical style or character that merits additional design review to preserve neighborhood character.

POTENTIAL UPTOWN CONSERVATION AREAS:

- Bankers Hill
- C.E. Seaman
- Crittenden's Addition
- Mission Hills
- Robinson Mews/ Albatross
- University Heights

CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES:

- New Construction/ Development
- Additions/ Remodels

PROCESS TO DEVELOP GUIDELINES:

- Identify a potential conservation area
- Identify elements that contribute to the unique character of the area
- Prepare guidelines that ensure consistency with the defining characteristics

CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES

DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS —
ELEMENTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO CHARACTER:

- Parcel Size/ Configuration
- Street Character
- Building Setbacks
- Landscape Type/Features
- Building Orientation
- Parking and Vehicular Access
- Building Frontage Type
- Building Scale and Massing
- Architectural Style
- Unique Features (Canyon interface, etc.)

ROBINSON MEWS/ ALBATROSS

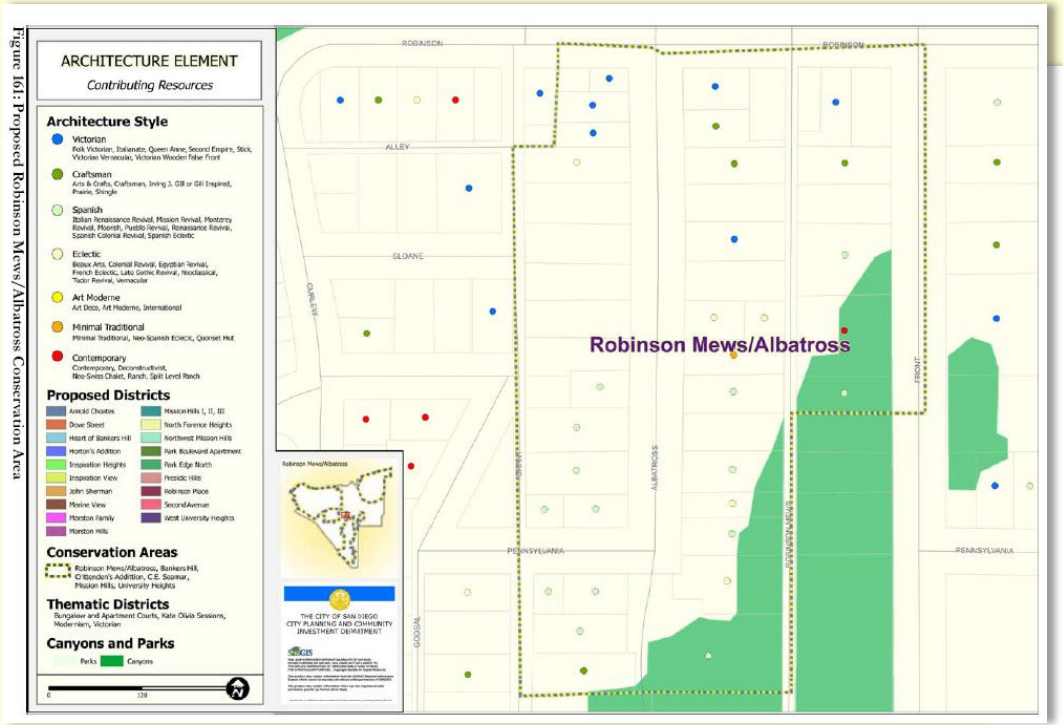


Figure 161: Proposed Robinson Mews/Albatross Conservation Area

- Located in the Hillcrest Neighborhood
- District identified in 2007 Historic Resources Survey
- Includes the predominant architectural styles found in Uptown

1.5 Proposed Robinson Mews/Albatross Conservation Area

Period of Significance: 1890-1930

Boundaries – Overall

- North of Brookes Avenue
- South of Robinson Avenue
- West of Front Street and Robinson Mews
- East of Brant Street and Albatross Street

See Attached Map for Further Information and Specific Boundaries

Total Structures	43
Potential Historic Resources	27
Non-Contributing Resources	16
Percentage Contributing	72%

Figure 156: Robinson Mews/Albatross Data

Applicable Conservation Area Criteria

- **Age** (fifty years old or older)
- **Integrity** (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association)
- **Historical Precedent** Historical precedent/community character (distinctive character with identifiable attributes, architecture, artistic value, use, urban design, or history integral to area's identity)
- **Scale/Massing**

Resource Types
(number of contributing resources)

- Contemporary (1)
- Craftsman (4)
- Mission Revival (7)
- Queen Anne Free Classic (2)
- Spanish Colonial Revival (7)
- Vernacular (3)
- Victorian Vernacular (3)

Landscape/Hardscape Resources

- Roundabout with planter bed
- Low front yard walls
- Mature horticulture
- Urban canyon
- Viewsheds
- Houses set back significantly from the street

The proposed Robinson Mews/ Albatross Conservation Area contains a total of 43 structures. 27 of these structures are potential historic resources. 11 structures are non-contributing due to significant alteration, while five are out of date range.

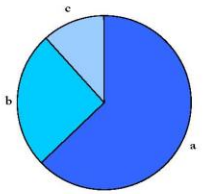


Figure 157: Contributing vs. Non-Contributing Resources

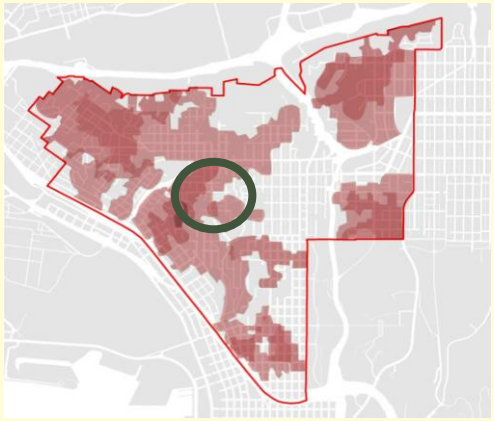
a. Potential Historic Resources (27)
b. Non-Contributing: Significant Alteration (11)
c. Non-Contributing: Out of Date Range (5)

The area north of Walnut Street was subdivided along trolley lines in the late 1880s. Before 1907, however, development and construction was sporadic, with only a small number of buildings scattered in close proximity to the trolley route.[4]

The proposed Robinson Mews/ Albatross Conservation Area is located in the southwest corner of the broad area commonly known as Hillcrest. Prior to

[4] City of San Diego, "Uptown Historic Context...," 19.

ROBINSON MEWS/ ALBATROSS



COMMUNITY CHARACTER ANALYSIS (2010)

DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS IDENTIFIED IN 2007 SURVEY:

- Roundabout with planter bed
- Low front yard walls
- Mature horticulture
- Urban Canyon
- Viewsheds
- Houses set back significantly from the street

PARCEL SIZE / CONFIGURATION

1,200 – 5,000 square feet

5,000 – 15,000 square feet

7,500 square feet
= Typical

15,000 – 25,000 square feet

PARCEL SIZE / CONFIGURATION

FINDINGS:

- Narrow, deep parcels predominate (typically 50’ x 150’)
- Predominant east/west parcel orientation
- Parcel widths result in a regular pattern of 35’ - 40’ wide building frontages

EXAMPLE GUIDELINES:

- Parcels generally should not be subdivided to have frontages less than 50’ wide
- In order to maintain the established rhythm of building facades along the length of the street, the width of primary building facades at the front setback should reflect the established pattern along a given street, even on lots wider than 50’

STREETSCAPE CHARACTER

- 40’ street cross-section
- Parallel & diagonal on-street parking
- 12’ Sidewalk/planting strip

- 14’ alley cross-section
- No on-street parking
- No sidewalk/planting strip

- 17’ street cross-section
- On-street parking—one side
- No sidewalk/planting strip

- 20 & 30’ street cross-sections
- On-street parking
- 5’ sidewalks

STREETSCAPE CHARACTER

FINDINGS:

- Streetscape character is highly variable by street—four different right-of-ways and cross-sections.
- Predominant pattern along Albatross (and alleys) is a narrow street cross-section with no sidewalks and no formal street tree planting.

EXAMPLE GUIDELINES:

No guidelines required. New development generally will not change the design of the public right-of-way.

BUILDING SETBACKS

Small front yard setback
(10-15 feet)

Minimal setback from alley
(2 feet)

Large front yard setback
(30-40 feet)

Side yard adjacent to street
(10-12 feet)

BUILDING SETBACKS

FINDINGS:

- Building setbacks differ by street.
- Predominant pattern along Albatross St. has deep front setbacks (30-40 ft).

EXAMPLE GUIDELINES:

- Front yard setbacks should be consistent with the predominant pattern established along affected street frontage.

GARDEN WALLS AND FENCES

Wood Fence

Low Stone Retaining Wall

Low Stone Retaining Wall and Planting

Retaining wall at side yard

GARDEN WALLS AND FENCES

FINDINGS:

- Short walls or fences are used to define private space and mitigate changes in grade
- Walls vary in design character. Materials include concrete, brick, and natural rock
- Walls and fences are generally modest in scale and do not obscure buildings or yards

EXAMPLE GUIDELINES:

- Walls and fences, including retaining walls and walls attached to buildings, should be constructed of complementary, natural materials
- Garden walls and fences should not obscure building frontage.
- Historic garden walls and fences should be preserved

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Dense, “naturalistic” landscape

Lawn with limited trees
(including palm trees)

Front yard as parking area
(parking strips and gravel)

Informal, “lawn-alternative”
landscape

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

FINDINGS:

- Front yard landscape treatment varies, but lawn treatment predominates
- No consistent streetscape treatment
- Limited street tree planting of palm trees
- Mature landscape throughout
- Distinctive roundabout with planter bed at Albatross and Pennsylvania Streets.

EXAMPLE GUIDELINES:

- Private realm landscaping should not obscure buildings or entries
- Continue the pattern of palm trees as the primary street tree for the district
- Allow for more sustainable alternatives to lawns that preserve the openness, scale and lushness of this predominant landscape treatment
- Future development shall preserve mature landscaping

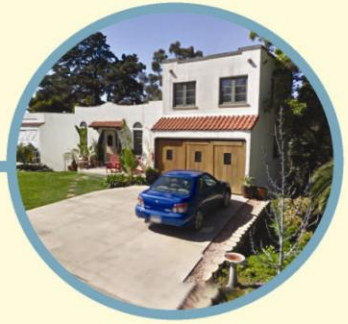
PARKING/ VEHICULAR ACCESS

Alley-accessed garage, with parking in front yard setback

Front-accessed garage, recessed behind primary facade

Alley-accessed garage

Front-accessed garage, forward of primary facade



PARKING/ VEHICULAR ACCESS

FINDINGS:

- Much of the district has garage access from alleys—limiting the intrusion of driveways into front yards
- Many of the front-loaded garages are recessed behind the main façade
- Instances of parking pads created in front yard setback

EXAMPLE GUIDELINES:

- Whenever possible, garages and driveway access should be provided from the rear of the lot.
- Front-loaded garages should be recessed behind the plane of the main building façade.
- Parking in the front setback should be prohibited.

CANYON INTERFACE

Private canyon access

Buildings step down to canyons at back of lot

Stone retaining wall that responds to grade change

Consistent Height at Street Frontage

CANYON INTERFACE

FINDINGS:

- Canyons are generally not visible from the public realm. Visual and physical access generally restricted to private property and/or street endings.
- Design response to canyons occurs primarily at rear of lots (i.e., does not significantly influence the public appearance of buildings)
- Rear of buildings along canyons generally are screened by vegetation, but some visually encroach into canyon

EXAMPLE GUIDELINES:

- Buildings on parcels with significant grade change should maintain consistent street frontage with adjacent parcels.
- Buildings should be designed to limit their visual impact on views from within or across the canyon through landscape screening and by stepping building volumes down the slope (rather than perching over the canyon on piers)

SCALE AND MASSING

Consistent scale and massing with diverse styles

Consistent scale and massing with similar styles

Inconsistent scale and massing

Consistent scale and massing on remodeled building

SCALE AND MASSING

FINDINGS:

- Predominantly one-story buildings, with a few 1 ½ and 2-story buildings, that maintain a low profile
- Buildings generally have a very simple massing

EXAMPLE GUIDELINES:

- New and modified buildings should conform to the predominant scale of the district
- Second-story additions should be setback from the primary façade to preserve the historic scale of the building
- Building masses and facades should be designed with simple, harmonious proportions
- Buildings should reflect the simple and well-scaled volumes of the district's historic buildings
- Excessive roof breaks and overly complicated roof forms should be avoided

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

Victorian (8)

Craftsman (5)

Spanish/ Mission Revival (13)

Eclectic (5)

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

FINDINGS:

- The district has an eclectic mix of styles from the early 20th Century
- No single style predominates
- Examples of Spanish Colonial and Mission Revival are most numerous

EXAMPLE GUIDELINES:

- Additions and remodels need to be consistent with the style of the original structure
- "A Field Guide to American Houses" (McAlester, Lee and Virginia McAlester, Knopf, 1984) should be used as a source to identify the defining attributes associated with each architectural style
- While new development does not need to conform to any one particular style, new building forms should be responsive to prevailing district patterns related to scale, massing, articulation, and materials

BUILDING FRONTAGE

Covered porch

Recessed Porch

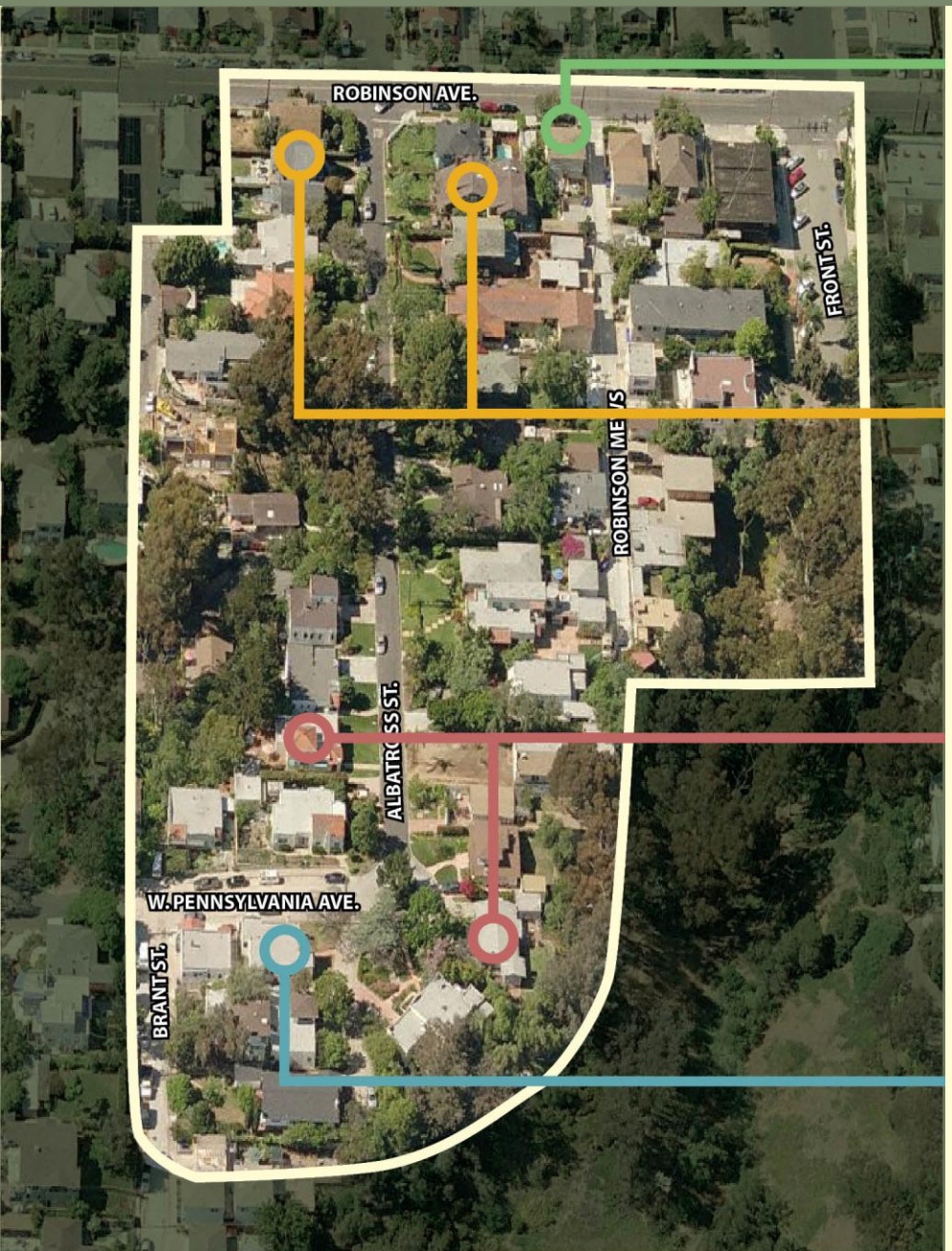
Extended Porch

Extended porch

Porch with arcade

Residential terrace with recessed entry

BUILDING FRONTAGE



FINDINGS:

- Regardless of architectural style, the majority of the buildings have a clearly defined porch entry
- The most common porch type extends out from the main façade of the building
- The majority of the porches are elevated 2-4 steps above the front yard grade
- On sloping sites, the porch is generally replaced with a residential terrace defined by garden walls

EXAMPLE GUIDELINES:

- Buildings should have a well-defined porch entry
- Projecting porches should be covered by a roof or recessed into building
- Porches and stoops should be raised at least 2 steps from the front yard grade
- Porches should be consistent with the building scale, architectural style, and materials

IN SUMMARY

INTENT OF DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- Preserve overall scale and character
- Prevent overdevelopment of small blocks
- Maintain existing views and relationship with canyon
- Encourage consistent landscape treatment, street character, and setbacks
- Encourage use of natural, historic materials

NEXT STEPS:

- Gather feedback on defining characteristics and guidelines
- Apply to other identified conservation areas
- Develop detailed illustrations, graphics